

TOMBSTONE EPITAPH

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\$1,000,000 A DAY FOR SMOKE

It is easy to understand why in less enlightened ages fire was regarded universally with superstitious reverence or with superstitious fear. Its visitations were often so sudden and unexpected, it came to such unthought of places and in such strange ways that it had the appearance of a spirit, often beneficent but more often malicious, wholly beyond human control.

However much the public at large may lag behind, it is to the credit of America that she has taken the lead in the matter of investigating fire origins, of tabulating results of investigation, and of arriving at definite conclusions.

Of the three human failing that are the causes of nearly all fires—carelessness, ignorance and criminality—the first named is easily chief. Taken together, and making every allowance for doubtful cases, ignorance and criminality play a very inconsiderable part in the ever-recurring toll of disaster.

Americans' tolerance of their huge fire losses is a striking inconsistency, as in many other ways this country leads the world in saving expenses, not as regards consumption, but as regards production.

If America could but remove from the debit side of her ledger the sum of \$300,000,000 a year that goes up in smoke, and convert the loss to an asset, her premier position would be doubly secure. And to do this is simply a matter of national "good housekeeping," proper building construction, using fire-retarding materials whenever possible, and providing adequate protection in the form of modern fire-extinguishment apparatus.

"TO 'BILLY' SPEAR!"

The newspaper workers of the capital city honored J. W. Spear, editor of the Arizona Republican, dean of Arizona newspaper men, Sunday evening at a dinner attended by every reporter, editor and correspondent of Phoenix. There was no special occasion for the tribute, such as a birthday or some anniversary of an auspicious event in the life of the veteran editor, but that was just the way they felt about him. Any day is occasion enough to honor a man like "Billy" Spear, the beloved veteran of the newspaper game. There are no higher ethics than the ethics of journalism, and "Billy" Spear lives them in his every-day relation with those with whom he comes in contact, whether they be of the public or of the brotherhood of news workers. None knows him but to love him and none names him but to praise him, and every carman of the press gallery in Arizona will subscribe to this tribute contained in one of the many testimonials presented to him at the Phoenix gathering:

And may each fast succeeding year
Bring such a tribute, fond and dear,
As we may give who've gathered here
To Billy Spear!

And while the Hassayampa flows,
Whose virtue each reporter knows,
May all be friends and none be foes
To Billy Spear!—Tucson Star.

LET THEM HOWL

The Snitchers' Association is in full blast. The dealers who have reaped a tremendous profit during the prevalence of high prices are now besieging Washington, the pulpit, the platform and the press to save them from the prices falling all around them and threatening to overwhelm every commodity in which this country deals. The cotton planters are storming, the wool and wheat men are loud in their lamentations, the plaintiffs of the sugar gamblers fill the air. Dealers in building materials and rent boosters join their voices to the clamor.

Thus far there has been little sign that the outcries will be heeded. Washington authorities state frankly that they believe the present conditions in manufacturing, transportation, credit and employment indicate that the price slump is fully under way and will continue until a more level price is reached than has obtained for some time.

There will be personal hardships, some of them perhaps undeserved, entailed in the landslide, but there is little danger of any serious general breakdown of either industrial or financial machinery. Where there are individual failures even aggregating a considerable total their tendency will be toward better adjustments and the elimination of the incompetent. The crop situation is satisfactory in the main. Freight transportation is improving. Cold weather is expected to stimulate trades now a little slow.

The average consumer has little sympathy with those who try to keep prices up. Any hard times precipitated by the price slump will be little more difficult than the situation forced by excessive high prices, and there will be more hope ahead.

THE EDITOR'S MISSION

No one knows when the first sentinel was posted. No doubt the caveman set his son upon a high place to shout his warning of impending danger. Armies do not sleep without keen, wakeful men to guard them. More important than any army is a civilization.

It is a vast thing, outreaching the horizon of any hu-

man eye, always moving, never still. It represents wealth achievement, the accumulated accomplishments of centuries in knowledge and experience. It, too, must have its sentinels.

Men have said to us that editors are always finding something the matter with things. It is a pity that the allegation is not more generally true. It is an easy task to sleep on duty. Nor is the trained and skilled sentry apt to waste his time calling out at the midnight hour that the stars are twinkling and that all is peace and quiet. It is not his duty to note the usual and identify the harmless. He is at his post to look for trouble and report it when it comes.

What the sentinel is to an army the editor is, or should be, to civilization and to national institutions.

An intellect trained in the science of close analysis, apt in the ability to pierce through the false and see the truth beneath, competent to unearth concealed dangers, quick to sense the menace in proposals that are plausible but inherently menacing, as sensitive to illogical conclusions as the trained ear is to discord, is a true editorial intellect.

The instinct for the chase which is thus developed in the editor is the warranty of his efficiency. There are editors, of course, who achieve success by not thinking. They are content to say nothing in many words. Thus they offend none. They are impotent, but not harmless.

The editor, on the other hand, who is true to his profession and dedicated at heart to the full performance of the functions his calling demands of him is inevitably a shining mark for the arrows of those who love sham and hypocrisy and hate truth.

He is a fighter, battling today against hypocrisy and tomorrow against the rattle-snake. He is no cynic and no pessimist, although his pen is forever pointing out the weak spots and exhorting the corrupt. The doctor does not bother with the well; his place of business is the sick-room. The editor, unfortunately, must spend most of his time also at the operating table.

If we should try to describe all that is good and true, and holy and reassuring and inspiring in America, our hand would pals before the task could be accomplished, and there is not enough white paper on which to print the facts. There is so much more good than there is bad; so much more to commend than there is to condemn. But that which is good needs no eulogist, and that which is bad can never find enough denouncers.

This country and the world needs more editors who can see straight and who are not afraid to tell what they do see. If those who by their calling are charged with the responsibility for diagnosing the wisdom of governmental proposals and the trend of events prove incapable or negligent, the people must perish.

Progress is not a natural thing. It is won by hard fighting and reaped only in the same way. The tendency of mankind is to take the easiest way, which is the backward way, and it requires wise as well as honest leadership to keep moving in the right direction.

Because he is compelled to see the things that are bad, the editor, above all other men, knows the good that is in the world. That is why he is a great optimist. He, more than any other, appreciates the magnificence of the treasure he is called on to guard, and that is why he is so keen to keep the treasure clean.—Nogales Herald.

ORE AND BULLION RATE RAISED

One of the features of the new railroad tariff bill is the fact that the rates on ores to the smelters as well as the bullion rate to the eastern refineries is to be boosted 33 1/3 per cent, says the Mohave County Miner, of Kingman, Arizona. It is said that this rate will put many of the properties working on a close margin out of commission. That this is true it will be noted that some of the smaller properties have shut down, and in Michigan three of the old producers of copper at Houghton have closed, possibly forever. The rate represents an increase of 1-4 cent per pound on copper and lead and 1¢ per ounce on silver. Aside from this the mine and mill man is put up against a big increase in the freight on his supplies. Labor in the mines is unprecedently high and is said to be less efficient than prewar times, but the laborer, especially the married fellow, is not laying up a cent from his increased pay check because of the enormous increase in living costs. His burden has not been lightened. While we feel that the railroads are entitled to an increase in freight rates to get by on we also feel that something should be done to aid the metal miners of the country and help them to maintain a living wage for their employees. For years the metal miners of the west have been up against a peculiar proposition. During the war many of the best miners and timbermen went to the coast and were employed in the work of the government at possibly better pay than the mines afforded, and since the war they have continued in the same employment. Their absence from the mines compelled the employment of men, who had little knowledge of the business and this condition remains to this day. The old hands remaining with the company have endeavored to make better miners of the crude material at hand, but have succeeded indifferently and at large expense. We will take this county as an illustration: The camp of Oatman employed none but white labor and it was getting along like a big family when the war broke out. Today it is almost an impossibility to get the white labor to fill the mine quotas and we understand that Mexican labor in some instances is being resorted to. No matter what the wage paid to cheap labor it is always dear in the end and the cost shows in the record eventually.

To prevent the closing of the larger mines something must soon be done to tide over the season of high costs, either by a bonus on gold and the free coinage of silver or to further the use of copper, lead and zinc at a greater price than the market at present. A country without mines is in a deplorable condition, but if the government does not soon get busy it will see the United States deep in the doldrums.

"And the world goes on just the same."

THE PERIPATETIC BUNGALOW

William Ward, of Staten Island, New York, has found a method by which to beat, at one stroke, profiteering landlords, extortionate coal men and exorbitant railroads. He has built a bungalow on wheels. It might be called a land houseboat or a cruising automobile, but it resembles a real bungalow, differing from others of its class merely in the fact that it is smaller, and mounted on an automobile chassis. There is a comfortable living room, which can also be turned into a bedroom on occasion, and an adequate kitchen and bathroom. Many a metropolitan flat-dweller has no more room and fewer conveniences.

He and his family are going to start soon in this traveling residence for a trip to St. Petersburg, Fla. They prefer to spend the winter where they will need no artificial means to keep warm. If cold weather comes on the way, wood will serve for fuel. The cost of building the bungalow and motoring to Florida, in it, says Mr. Ward, will be less than that of going by train.

This sounds rather idyllic. Many a northerner may consider it a tempting means of escape from the winter cold and the cost of living. It will be just as well, though, if the northern population is a bit cautious about stampeding southward in flivver bungalows. There might not be room for everybody in Florida. And besides, just think how it would clutter up the roads.

MURDEROUS INCOMPETENCY

How wrong will the public continue to allow the inexperienced or the otherwise unfit to drive automobiles?

The other day in one of the eastern cities a man turned his machine out to pass another. He got by all right, but he failed to straighten up quickly enough afterwards. His car jumped the curb and killed a little baby whose mother had it out for an airing in its carriage. When the matter was investigated it was found that the license was a temporary one, issued to the driver until his permanent license should be delivered, and that he was a novice at driving a car, lacking both the knowledge and the experience to handle his machine safely in any complicated situation.

This sort of thing will continue as long as no suitable tests are required to prove the fitness of the driver before he is allowed to operate a car in the public streets. The driver who is competent has no reason to resent such an examination; rather, he will welcome it. The person who objects to it is the one who should be forced to take it, in the interest of public safety.

HYDROELECTRIC POSSIBILITIES

It has been shown that a great power system drawing its electrical energy from steam and water generation would save 30,000,000 tons of coal annually, representing \$150,000,000, the labor of more than 30,000 miners and the release of vast railroad carrying capacity for other freight. Such a project stretching from Washington to Boston and drawing its electrical energy from steam and water generation, is the design of the government, which is developing plans to meet the new era in power development which it is thought will result from the water-power legislation passed at the last session of congress. Scientific men say that it is almost unbelievable that a progressive people like those in the United States should cling to methods that are as antique as the ox-cart by insisting upon digging and transporting coal, and robbing Mother Earth of all her natural mineral resources, when all that is needed is the development of waterpowers on streams which have for centuries awaited development.

DECLINING PRICES

The public has been cheerfully aware in the past few weeks that prices were very gently started on the down grade. Bradstreet's figures show just how far prices have tumbled and afford some interesting comparisons.

In the January immediately following the armistice prices dropped 4.9 per cent. In May of this year they went down 4.1 per cent, and in August 4.5. October 1st finds them 5.9 per cent lower than September 1st, the biggest drop to date. The October 1 index number is 19 per cent lower than the high peak which was reached last February; it is 13.8 per cent lower than on October 1, 1917; 4.6 per cent below October 1, 1918; it is almost identical with that of October 1, 1917. All this sounds encouraging enough, but that there is room for still further dropping is shown by the fact that the index number is still 94 per cent higher than it was on August 1, 1914.

The reduction has not been very evenly distributed. Miscellaneous articles have declined 40 per cent while the four chief food groups have declined only 5.4 per cent since the high peak of last February. Other commodities range between those two figures—naval stores and textiles 33 and 32 per cent, respectively; breadstuffs, metals, hides and leather about 13 per cent each; vegetable oils 20 per cent.

The decline is almost as unsteady as it is unequal. Until a general fair level has been reached, prices are likely to fluctuate considerably. The cheering fact for the public in all this is that continued thrift and steadiness in its spending, avoiding luxuries and encouraging the production of essentials, will keep the price movement generally downward, as those tendencies on the part of the public have already started the beginning of the end of the exorbitantly high price level.

We're not for this business of shooting at the moon. One of these nights some scientific Red may blow it up, and then what'll we do for moonlight?

The quadrennial peanut-rolling, wheel-barrow trundling and hat-buying will now begin. There is nothing like an election to speed up industry.

Good roads are a device whereby the farmer is enabled to sell his product to city men at city prices without leaving his front yard.

OVER 10,000 VOTES POLLED IN COCHISE.

More than 10,000 votes were cast for governor in Cochise county in the election Tuesday. The total registration in the county was 13,000. The unofficial returns were completed today when the returns from Pool were received by mail, a total of 36 votes having been cast there for president and 29 for governor, 49 having failed to vote for governor, according to the unofficial sheet received here. Following is the corrected unofficial totals including every precinct in the county:

PLANIGAN	3129
MCALISTER	4945
HUGHES	4294
KUOHLER	1928
LUKE	3540
PARKER	2175
COX	4447
HARDING	3362
SMITH	4605
CAMERON	4911
HAYDEN	5072
DUNSEATH	3625
SIMMS	4476
CAMPBELL	5642
ROSS	3203
HALL	4032
MUNCH	4574
FAIRFIELD	4182
ENRIHART	5606
ESTELL	3872
JONES	4159
GALBRAITH	4992
PETERSON	3667
TOLES	5045
VAUGHN	4515
REED	4146
FOSTER	4546
WHITE	4787
MART	5113
KENNEY	3475
ADAMS	4676
WRIGHT	3933
KEMPTON	4392
HOOD	5488
WELCH	5729
RUTH	3312
ROSS	5102
BENSHAW	4192
BROWN	5789
BENEDICT	3032
HENSHAW	5589
BYRNE	3481
HUTCHISON	3267
NICHOLS	3721
SIMS	5241
CULL	3460
WOODS	1014
COBBE	798
BUCKETT	603
MCULLOUGH	605
DUNKER	450
GIBSON	551
BARKELL	884
CUTLER	804
WYLLIE	731
ROLLINS	586
KREBS	692
POWELL	562
WOOLEY	612
MILNER	698
30+ YES	1551
14 NO	4414
14 YES	1288
100 NO	4551
101 YES	1380
15 NO	4814
209 YES	1598
51 NO	1381
307 YES	1876
202 NO	1490
304 YES	1776
715 NO	3630
308 YES	2328
407 NO	5821
208 YES	587
509 NO	6033
51+ YES	1207
313 NO	5442
312 YES	2796
515 NO	3710

GLOBE HIGH SCHOOL TO OPEN ASSAY LABORATORY

PHOENIX, Nov. 2.—A mineral assay laboratory to be made available for prospectors and other mining men is being opened by the Globe high school, according to J. T. Ryan, supervisor of trades and industries in the state vocational education department, who has returned from a visit of inspection in Gila county. The assay laboratory will be under the direction of A. C. Swinson, a mining engineer, Ryan said. Ryan also visited the school at Florence, Pinal county, where a shop has been established for instructions in automobile mechanics.